



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman
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New Study Validates Effectiveness of School Choice Programs

A new study released today by the nonprofit, nonpartisan National Center for Policy Analysis (NCPA) shows that when parents are given the freedom to decide which schools their children attend, whether public or private, student academic performance improves.

The study notes that while America already has a system of school choice, equal educational opportunity remains elusive. Suburban parents are more likely to have the financial means to send their children to private schools if they outperform public ones. But low-income parents don't have this luxury. Several brief findings of the study include:

- A Harvard University study by Jay P. Greene found that students who stayed in the Milwaukee choice program for three to four years registered reading scores three to five points higher than their public school counterparts and math scores that were five to 11 points higher.
- A study by four researchers of the school choice programs in Washington D.C., Dayton, and New York City revealed that African Americans who switched from a public to a private school made test score gains of 3.3 percentage points in the first year and 6.3 percentage points in the second year.

The Bush proposal offers disadvantaged students a way out. Isn't it about time that we afford underprivileged children the same opportunities as the children of wealthy parents?

Message of the Day

School choice works. Studies have proven that state choice programs increase student achievement in reading, language, math, and science.

- ❑ *The No Child Left Behind plan will extend school choice opportunities to students in chronically failing schools.*
- ❑ *President Bush's plan provides special assistance to failing schools; the school choice option is only a last resort for students in chronically low-performing schools.*
- ❑ *No child should be forced to remain trapped in a school that will not teach and will not change.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- As a last resort, the Bush plan includes a safety valve choice initiative that gives parents the option of removing their child from a low-performing public school and sending them to a different public school after one year or a private school after three years of chronic failure.
- According to a recent bipartisan poll conducted for the National Education Association, 63 percent of Americans support the President's school choice plan.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Bush should stand firm in working with Congress to offer these poorest of poor children the opportunity to escape schools that ignore their needs. Without a chance at a quality education, these children will grow up to perpetuate the cycle of poverty in their communities. Neither parents nor educators should accept that."
Atlanta Journal-Constitution editorial, April 2, 2001